

cache of weapons and explosives, which he allegedly was intending to use in an elaborate mass killing scheme and blowing up of the campus of De Anza College in Silicon Valley. Having spent much time at De Anza College and working with many of its wonderful students, I was shocked to hear of this news.

As a former schoolteacher and principal, I know how hard it is for young people today to deal with the many pressures they face. We don't yet know what this young man's motives were, but this news is a powerful reminder to all of us that we must continue to do better in identifying the warning signs for violence in our schools and work personally with our students, teaching diversity, and tolerance.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, due to a serious family illness that necessitated my presence in my district yesterday and today, I was unable to vote during the following rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted as indicated below.

Rollcall No. 5 (H.R. 93, the Federal Firefighters Retirement Age Fairness Act)—Yes;

Rollcall No. 6 (H. Con. Res. 14, permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust)—Yes;

Rollcall No. 7 (H. Con. Res. 15, expressing sympathy for the victims of the devastating earthquake that struck India on January 26, 2001, and support for ongoing aid efforts)—Yes.

Rollcall No. 8 (Approval of the Journal)—Yes.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK GREGORIN

HON. ASA HUTCHINSON

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise to commend the valiant service of a fellow Arkansan, Mr. Frank Gregorin of Sommers, AR. A recounting of his World War II heroics was recently published in the 65th Signal Battalion's July 2000 Newsletter which follows below. I want to again thank Mr. Gregorin for his service to our country during those difficult times and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

[From the 65th Signal Battalion, July 2000 Newsletter]

"March 29, 1945 began as an ordinary World War II day in Europe, but on this day I was scheduled to become a cinder. It was my turn to die unless some friend would help me. The help I would need was nearly impossible to obtain. The friend would have to put his life on the line, place himself in worse danger than I who was about to die. And this was not enough. He would have to have certain skills and be able to summon super-human strength. He would have to disregard enemy rifle fire and work patiently beside gasoline which was about to explode. He would have

to disregard all these dangers and concentrate on a tough and complicated task. I had such a friend and didn't know it.

The day was the one where we departed France and entered Germany. Our convoy of 65th Signal Battalion vehicles moved into Worms, Germany, a large city on the West side of the Rhine River. The city appeared intact, but soon we noticed that those tall buildings had no insides. All roofs had fallen into basements. It was a city of shell buildings.

We arrived at the river and began a drive across it on a two track bridge, one track for each wheel, supported by flimsy pontoons. I was perched on a repair bench inside the shop of a radio-repair truck. Slight waves in the river made the pontoons roll back and forth. Movements of the convoy made it worse. There was concern that trucks would tip over and sink into the river, but all made it across. The convoy began moving deeper into Germany. First roads wound through the Hartz Mountains. Danger seemed past so I made myself comfortable. A repair bench on the away from the cliff became a bed on which I could enjoy forest scenery. It was beautiful. What a pleasant way to fight a war.

Suddenly, the convoy stopped. Looking out the window, forward, men were running away from me. To the rear, men were running away from me. Obviously, I was in some kind of a problem area. A view through the rear window told the story. There was no view, only fire, and no ordinary fire. Yow! Those were violent gasoline flames hitting the window. The entire supply of gasoline on board the trailer of the radio-repair truck was about to explode! The only exit was through the one door, through the flames, to the outside world. All windows had steel screening which could not be removed. A small, six-inch diameter opening in the front of the show was too small to pass me. I wasted precious time, wondering if somehow I could fit through the little hole. No. I must dive through the fire. I opened the door, slightly. A bunsen-burner flame blew into the truck from the top of that tiny opening to bottom. I dared open it no further.

At this point, a voice came to me from outside and beneath the door, "Stay in the truck, Oneby!" Technical Sergeant Frank Gregorin was beneath those wild flames unhitching the trailer. This was no comfort. It takes a wrench to release this type of hitch and at least two men to move the trailer; the book says four. The trailer, besides having a gasoline supply, held the entire weight of a fifteen-kilowatt gasoline-powered electric generator. He had arrived at the hitch too fast to have a wrench. He was trying to unhitch the damn thing barehanded. I'd never seen anyone even try it.

I stared at the six-inch diameter hole in the front of the repair shop. It was still too small for me to squeeze through. Suddenly, success! The flames departed from the rear window Sergeant Gregorin had removed the hitch and was walking the trailer over to the cliff, single-handedly. If one of the wheels had hit a pebble or the trailer became unbalanced in any way, he wouldn't have been able to handle it. I opened the door and prepared to join him in this four-man job. What I saw was frightening. Flames were flowing off the trailer in a vertical sheet. The sheet was inches away behind him. He didn't know of this danger and was looking at me. He yelled, "Stay away from here, Oneby. That's an order!" He was so worried about me, he didn't realize that a slight change in the direction of the wind, and he'd be burned alive. No one could ever continue carrying a heavy trailer with a bunsen-burner flame hitting him.

I closed the door, so he wouldn't look at me, gave him time to look away then opened

it again. Sergeant Gregorin had already thrown the trailer over the cliff and hit the dirt, flat as a pancake. His timing was perfect. The trailer blew up as it left his hand. A mushroom cloud moved up into the sky. I'd never seen one before. Pieces of metal were flying everywhere. I hadn't had time to be scared until then. The realization of the closeness of a nasty way of dying sunk in right there.

Everyone, including me, converged on Greg to see what was left of him. He arose and moved his arms sideways proving to himself and the rest of us that he was completely whole, not a scratch. Unbelievable.

Sergeant Damrow couldn't believe he was unhurt. He asked, incredulously, "Are you sure, you're not hurt?" Then, "You were a damn fool, Greg!" I thought, "Thank God for a damn fool." Something holy and miraculous had occurred. My wonderful sergeant had become a miracle man.

Sergeant Hess, who had been driving behind Sergeant Gregorin, called us to see damage to his vehicle. Snipers had put bullets into his windshield and wipers. Snipers had started the gasoline fire. Snipers had hit vehicles ahead and behind Sergeant Gregorin's vehicle. When Greg began his rescue, the snipers ceased their firing. I like to believe they were in awe of a brave man. Did they watch the scene from the forest above the road?

Greg returned to his vehicle behind the radio truck. I returned to the bench but didn't lie down and enjoy scenery for a whole day. Later, I asked Greg, "Would you like me to report this event, so you receive a medal?" He gave a negative reply. It was war time, and there was little opportunity for writing, immediately.

The war ended, and one day there was a big battalion meeting. Medals were issued with no mention of Greg. I could not imagine a more heroic deed, yet he got nothing. I asked him again, and he stood firm on his previous commitment. Soon he learned the folly of his way. With the medals came points to get the men home, sooner. He lamented secretly to me, "Maybe I should have let you report that event."

A sad day arrived. Greg got kicked up the ladder, transferred to higher headquarters and made into a master sergeant. His heroism and great capabilities seemed to be rewarded slightly. He disappeared from my life for a few months, then returned one day for a visit.

The 65th Signal Battalion was stationed atop a mountain near Stuttgart, Germany. He visited during October 1945. Upon his arrival, his replacement, Sergeant Valentine, called to me, saying, "A friend of yours is here." I was pleasantly surprised to see him in great health and with the smile I always like to see. Sergeant Valentine took our picture together. It was the last I would see of him for many years. We both returned home to busily take up where we left off. We eventually began exchanging letters and again got to visit together. Although not near neighbors, we do live within 800 miles of each other. I count him as my best friend. No one could ever beat him at that.

HONORING NEW MEXICO'S CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 31, 2001

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Catholic School Week. I